CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 14 February 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Alessandro Vattani (Italy)

GE.95-60506 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 697th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

It gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, His Excellency Sardar Aseff Ahmad Ali, who will be addressing the Conference today. Before assuming his current position as head of Pakistan's diplomacy, the Foreign Minister served his country in many different capacities, notably as a member of the National Assembly, and as Minister of State for Economic Affairs. We are indeed grateful to the Minister for finding time in his very busy schedule to come and share with us the views of his Government on the important issues on our agenda. His presence among us today is a further confirmation of Pakistan's deep and abiding involvement in the multilateral approach to arms limitation and disarmament. I know that we will all be listening to the Minister's statement with keen interest. I should now like to give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, His Excellency Sardar Aseff Ahmad Ali.

Mr. SARDAR ASEFF (Pakistan): I consider it an honour that the Conference on Disarmament has convened this session to enable me to make this statement.

I would like to extend to you, Mr. President, our warm felicitations on the assumption of your important office. I am sure the work of the Conference on Disarmament will benefit immensely from your long experience and deep commitment to the vital objectives which this Conference is seeking to achieve. I assure you of Pakistan's full cooperation in the discharge of your important responsibilities. I would also like to avail of this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Sirous Nasseri of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who guided the deliberations of the last session of the Conference with consummate skill and competence.

Pakistan has made active contributions to the quest for disarmament. Today, I have come to this body to emphasize our desire to play a constructive role in promoting peace, security and disarmament, globally and specially in South Asia. Although, in recent years, the world has changed dramatically, in many ways it remains disappointingly the same. The threat of a global nuclear holocaust has receded over the horizon. But the nuclear arsenals which will remain after the agreed reductions will be sufficient to devastate the planet. The dangerous stability of "mutual assured destruction" has been replaced by a less fearsome, but more uncertain, multipolar world; a world which is in rapid transition to an unknown destination. In short, an equally dangerous world. In this period, when history is moving ahead at lightning speed, agreements for the control of arms and for disarmament are required more than ever before, to diminish the dangers of the disputes which have surfaced, to reduce the consequences of the conflicts which have proliferated in so many regions of the world, to lessen the dangers of one country after another descending into chaos.

Unfortunately, history does not offer much encouragement for the noble aim of containing arms as a means of diminishing the danger or the suffering of conflicts and disputes among States. In the past, States have observed

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the dictum: to avoid war, States must be prepared to fight it. And fight they have. Throughout history, disarmament has never been voluntary. It was always imposed by the victor on the vanquished. During the cold war, when the global arms race assumed entirely irrational proportions, all that could be achieved was a regulation of the massive proliferation of nuclear and conventional arms by the super-Powers and their allies. The build-down of these weapons commenced only once the cold war concluded.

The challenge confronting us today is to construct agreements for arms control and disarmament, not by imposing them on the defeated or weak, but by convincing each State that the restraint required would be in its own self-interest. But to realize this essential objective, the world community will need to vigorously address and resolve the underlying disputes, the roots of hostility and conflict between States. We shall need to ensure that imbalances in power and armaments do not encourage some States to resort to aggression, or seek domination, within or outside their regions. Above all, it will be essential to convince all States that nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are not essential to preserve their security and independence.

The cold war is over. The rationale for the competitive build-up of nuclear arsenals no longer exists. Yet, sadly, the majority of the nuclear Powers are not prepared to commit themselves to ultimately giving up their nuclear weapons. These nuclear Powers make no promise that our world will, one day, be safe for our children, be free of nuclear weapons. In the present era, the basic question confronting the Conference on Disarmament is the following: Is our ultimate objective here to promote a world free of nuclear weapons? The answer, naturally, must be yes. This affirmative response should be expressed in a binding commitment by the nuclear-weapon States. In our view, such a commitment to rid themselves of nuclear weapons is an essential incentive, if not a precondition, for the realization of non-proliferation and nuclear arms control on a universal basis.

We are, of course, encouraged by the progress made in nuclear disarmament in recent years. The reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the former Soviet Union, under the START I and START II agreements, will be unprecedented in disarmament history. Our optimism about the positive impact of these agreements is, however, tempered by the decision of the United States and the Russian Federation to retain the alarming number of 3,000 nuclear warheads each. When cold war competition has been transformed into a Partnership for Peace, the retention of such huge arsenals is, in our view, not justifiable. We will continue to work for general and complete nuclear disarmament. In this context, we attach special importance to the early establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament. This Committee should begin negotiations as soon as possible to evolve a concrete and time-bound programme for nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are really two sides of the same coin. Nuclear non-proliferation gains its legitimacy as a goal because it is meant to facilitate the larger aim of nuclear disarmament. It was not the purpose of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty to divide the

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world perpetually into States which possess nuclear weapons and others which do not. This Treaty was a transitional arrangement - initially for a period of 25 years - to enable the nuclear Powers to negotiate the measures for nuclear disarmament. The promise contained in article VI of the NPT, to promote nuclear disarmament, is not a concession by the nuclear-weapon States; it is an obligation which is at least as crucial to non-proliferation as the commitment of its non-nuclear parties to refrain from developing nuclear weapons.

It is not my purpose here to restate our views on the NPT - its inherent inequality; the non-fulfilment of the commitments contained in article IV and article VI of the Treaty; the absence of credible security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. We are glad that, notwithstanding these shortcomings, the NPT has been ratified by an ever-growing number of States. Most of them believe that nuclear weapons are not relevant to the preservation of national independence. Some others were persuaded by the cold war alliance arrangements to forswear nuclear weapons. And the NPT has gained important adherents in recent years.

The NPT does not respond to Pakistan's security concerns and we deplore its discriminatory character. However, we favour the extension of the Treaty because we acknowledge that a breakdown in the NPT consensus would have negative implications for international stability. On the eve of the NPT review and extension conference, it is evident that the existing consensus regarding the Treaty is fragile. This consensus could unravel if it becomes obvious that the NPT is seen by its sponsors as a means to perpetuate inequality and discrimination. As the cold war security structures evolve and mutate, and the number of conflicts and crises proliferate across Euro-Asia, the world community will need to specially bear in mind the security concerns of those nuclear-capable NPT parties which have exercised commendable self-restraint. There is also a sense of unhappiness among many developing members of the NPT at the discriminatory treatment they receive. Some of them have rightly complained that their acceptance of the NPT has not removed the suspicion with which they are seen and treated. Their sense of frustration could erode the NPT consensus. In this context, the value of coercive options to promote non-proliferation that are sometimes bandied about should not be overestimated.

For over 30 years, Pakistan has advocated the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, as a means of halting the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. We welcomed last year's landmark decision by this Conference to mandate its Ad Hoc Committee to negotiate such a test-ban treaty. The treaty must be universal and non-discriminatory. We note with satisfaction the forward movement registered by the Committee and its two working groups under the experienced leadership of Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico.

The United Nations General Assembly has consistently emphasized the need to halt the production of fissionable materials and for the progressive conversion and transfer of stocks for peaceful uses. Pakistan is a party to this long-standing consensus on fissile materials. In 1993, the language of

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the United Nations General Assembly resolution was modified with a view to securing the endorsement of two important States for the goal of banning fissile materials. This change in the language of the 1993 General Assembly resolution cannot be construed to preclude consideration of the problem of unbalanced stockpiles held by various States. To freeze the existing asymmetries in the level of fissionable materials will have significant consequences for the security of some States. A freeze alone will not contribute to nuclear disarmament nor to non-proliferation.

After lengthy discussions, Pakistan has decided to support the adoption of a mandate for the ad hoc working group based on the language of the 1993 United Nations General Assembly resolution. We are able to support this language because Pakistan voted in favour of the resolution. We will, however, seek confirmation from this Conference that this language does not preclude any delegation from raising the issue of the scope of the convention during the actual negotiations. In this context, we reserve the right to ensure consideration of the question of asymmetric stockpiles.

The NPT extension, the CTBT and the fissile materials convention will not address adequately the problems of arms control and proliferation in two sensitive regions of the world - the Middle East and South Asia. In the Middle East, the desire of Egypt and other regional States for parity and non-discrimination in the level of nuclear non-proliferation commitments is understandable. We fully support the goal of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone which entails equitable and non-discriminatory obligations for all the parties concerned.

Pakistan's fears about nuclear proliferation in South Asia were expressed as early as the 1960s. Our fears, and our proposals for comprehensive safeguards to ensure against nuclear diversion, were dismissed by the major Powers, including by an earlier incarnation of this body. Instead, after the May 1974 explosion of a nuclear bomb next door, it was Pakistan, not our neighbour, which faced the brunt of embargoes on peaceful nuclear cooperation.

Our response to the Pokharan nuclear explosion was too seek agreement for a proposal for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. This proposal had been advanced by the late Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1972. Since 1974, the United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly endorsed this proposal. In 1978, we proposed an Indo-Pakistan declaration renouncing nuclear weapons. In 1979, we proposed reciprocal inspections by Pakistan and India of each other's nuclear facilities or simultaneous acceptance of full-scope safeguards. The same year, we expressed our readiness to accede to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) simultaneously with India. Later, in 1987, we proposed the conclusion of a bilateral or regional nuclear-test-ban treaty. In 1987, we also proposed the convening of a United Nations-sponsored conference on nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia. In 1991, Pakistan and the United States separately proposed the convening of a five-nation conference. All the proposed participants, except one, accepted this proposal. Last year, the United States proposed multilateral talks on security, arms control and non-proliferation in South Asia. The comprehensive approach of this

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United States proposal offers a realistic mechanism to address the interrelated security problems of South Asia - i.e. regional disputes, conventional arms imbalance and the danger of nuclear weapons proliferation. We understand that this proposal still remains on the table. We hope it will be pursued actively to obtain the endorsement of all the proposed parties.

I will not dwell on the Kashmir dispute in this forum, beyond stating that the key to agreements for the control of conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction in South Asia is a solution to this dispute; a dispute which poses one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The imbalance in conventional arms in South Asia further heightens insecurity and tensions in the region. While such grave asymmetries exist, it will be difficult to realize the goal of nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia. Pakistan has advanced several proposals for conventional arms control in South Asia including for a mutually agreed ratio of forces. These proposals remain on the table. In this context, we welcome the adoption of a General Assembly resolution on "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels". The Assembly has requested this Conference to consider the formulation of "principles" which can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control. This would be a more equitable and effective alternative to the purely supply-side strategies which seek "transparency" in conventional armaments.

There is not much time or space to arrest the danger of a wide-ranging and dangerous arms race in South Asia. Very soon, nuclear-capable short-range missiles may be produced and deployed by our neighbour, which is also developing and testing medium- and long-range ballistic missiles. Pakistan will be obliged to offer a matching response. The warning time of a surprise air attack will be reduced to a few minutes. Pakistan continues to hope that South Asia can step back from the precipice of a dangerous arms race. Pakistan and India have been unable to resolve their problems bilaterally. Two major disputes were settled through third-party mediation. We need the help of our friends to address and resolve the festering disputes and security problems which loom dangerously over South Asia. Pakistan will be responsive to all initiatives and proposals which are consistent with the principles of equity and justice.

In this post-cold-war era, the most serious threat to peace and security can arise from efforts to impose dominance over the other States. In the current era, attempts by one State, or group of States, to impose their will on others have become increasingly unrealistic. International security will have to be built, and preserved, through a cooperative approach, and through the mutual accommodation of the national interests of all States, in various regions of the world. International peace and security will have to be based not, as in the past, on the acquisition of arms but, increasingly, on the control and regulation of armaments, globally and regionally, through the free consent of the States concerned, a consent based on enlightened self-interest. To this end, it is essential that the measures on which this Conference agrees to negotiate, and the substance of these measures, must respond to the national interests and the security concerns of all States, and not merely the large and powerful countries.

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Pakistan will participate actively in this Conference to exploit the exciting opportunities which are now offered to build a stable structure of international security based on arms control and disarmament. Together with the United Nations Security Council, and the United Nations General Assembly, this Conference - the single negotiating body on disarmament - is called upon to play a vital role in the construction of this new architecture for collective security based on the vision of the United Nations Charter; a partnership for peace which is not restricted to one region or one continent but the entire world.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I have no other speakers on my list for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. CHANDRA (India): Mr. President, as this is the first time I take the floor while you are presiding over the Conference on Disarmament, let me express to you the congratulations of my delegation for the skill and wisdom with which you have steered the work of the Conference during the first part of the session which is generally difficult. We are happy to see you in the Chair as the representative of the friendly country of Italy and we will rely on your wisdom.

The distinguished Foreign Minister of Pakistan has in his statement today made several points on which I would like to give our comments. The CBMs proposed by Pakistan are an obvious bid to cover up their discomfiture and embarrassment at the fact that their clandestine nuclear weapon programme stands exposed by their own admissions even by their own leaders. They have, however, been so devised that India cannot possibly accept them as they do not take into account our vastly greater defence responsibilities and in the nuclear field run counter to our position about the need to take into account the global reach of nuclear weapons and of not doing anything which would sanctify unequal treaties and the division of the world into "haves" and "have-nots".

A reference was made to the proposal on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. Pakistan has been moving a resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia for the past several years while at the same time relentlessly pursuing its clandestine nuclear weapons programme. Now that there is overwhelming evidence regarding the true nature of Pakistan's nuclear programme, merely repeating the proposal at this stage must be viewed as a propaganda exercise and a tactic by Pakistan for diverting international pressure to give up its nuclear weapons programme.

India's views on the creation of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones are well known. Given the global reach of nuclear weapons, it is illusory to seek security through regional arrangements, particularly where the security interests of all the concerned States are not taken into account in defining the region. That is why India has proposed an action plan for the ushering in of a nuclear-weapon-free world. India has always been and is prepared to enter into consultations with Pakistan or any other country to work for the

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implementation of our phased programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons in a time-bound framework, which includes commitments to be given by nuclear-capable countries not to cross the threshold.

We have, in accordance with the Simla Agreement, made repeated offers to Pakistan orally and in writing for a bilateral dialogue for across-the-board normalization of relations. This offer has been backed up by a series of detailed and far-reaching proposals, contained in six non-papers, including a number of disarmament-related CBMs which build upon existing arrangements and are designed to further enhance confidence between the two countries. It is notable that these proposals include, inter alia, measures for maintenance of peace and security along the LOC, creation of a zone of disengagement in the Siachen area in Kashmir, extension of the existing agreement on non-attack on nuclear installations and facilities to include population centres and economic targets, an agreement on no first use or threat of use of nuclear capability against each other, etc. Pakistan, unfortunately, has so far chosen to spurn the offer of talks and the proposals made by us which gives the lie to their contention that there is a threat to international peace and security for if there was indeed a real threat, it would not be natural to fail to encourage any bilateral talks and explore any proposals made to avert it.

Pakistan's response to the non-paper on CBMs unfortunately reflects a compulsion to link the subject to the Jammu and Kashmir issue. Pakistan has failed to appreciate that CBMs are incremental in approach and help in reducing tensions.

Pakistan's dismissal of the Indian proposal on no first use of nuclear capability on the grounds that it is "unclear" does not take into account the fact that India's proposal is predicated upon "intent" and its concept of capability does not indicate actual weaponization and thus our proposal is a viable step towards confidence-building. It is disappointing that the suggestions that we have made even with regard to improving communications between the Directors-General of Military Operations do not appear to find favour with Pakistan at this stage. We do hope that Pakistan will be more forthcoming because such communication links lay the basis for transparency and reduce mistrust.

Coming to the subject of the point that was raised by the distinguished Foreign Minister on inability to settle differences, the fact is that Pakistan is trying to internationalize the Kashmir issue by raising the bogey of a threat to international peace and security. Any such move would give a setback to the normalization process now under way in Kashmir by encouraging Pakistani-supported terrorists and exacerbate further India-Pakistan relations. Bilateralism and not third-party involvement offers in our view the best modality for the resolution of India-Pakistan differences. It is common knowledge that third-party involvement was tested and it was found wanting in the period right up to 1971: it failed to prevent three wars between the two countries and failed to undo injustice done to India by Pakistani aggression. Meaningful and lasting solutions to problems between neighbours are best found in the bilateral frame. The late father of the

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present Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was then President of Pakistan, had solemnly committed himself to such a course of bilateralism in the Simla Agreement. It is very significant that it is the Simla Agreement which, in the period from 1971 till 1990, was the one agreement which was able to promote a normalization of relations between the two countries. It has to be recognized that if there are differences between neighbours then they have to be resolved bilaterally. We are surprised that the present Pakistan Government has been trying to resile from this Agreement.

India is always ready to engage in bilateral talks between the two countries for across-the-board normalization of relations in accordance with the Simla Agreement. In this context, it is relevant to recall the statement made by Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, Prime Minister of India, on 31 October 1994: "Let me reiterate that we remain committed, as always, to a resolution of all outstanding issues in accordance with the Simla Agreement, and I once again call upon our neighbour to respond to our efforts to establish good-neighbourly relations. I shall always be ready and willing to meet and continue the effort to peacefully resolve whatever differences there might be between our two countries."

In addition, I would like to make two more comments. Firstly, it was stated that India exploded a nuclear bomb in 1974. That was not a nuclear bomb but a peaceful nuclear explosion. Since then we have shown tremendous restraint by not moving towards weaponization. Secondly, Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India whose accession to India in legal terms and by popular consent is unquestionable. The only question that remains is the vacation of aggression by Pakistan committed in this Indian State.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India, Ambassador Chandra, for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. The floor has been asked for by His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan. I give him the floor.

Mr. SARDAR ASEFF (Pakistan): It is not my intention to inflict any kind of controversy between India and Pakistan on this distinguished Conference. However, I have heard the distinguished representative from India very carefully and I would merely respond by saying that Kashmir is a dispute according to Security Council resolutions and we must go out of this log-jam that we have got ourselves into by not insisting again and again that it is not a disputed territory. That is what makes disputes intractable and insoluble. It is a dispute and it must be addressed and we are prepared to involve ourselves in meaningful negotiations for the solution of this dispute. And, regarding the six Indian proposals sent to us, we have not rejected them, we are prepared to talk only on the six non-papers sent by India. But before the six non-papers were sent to us, I wish the distinguished representative of India had cared to mention the fact that we too had sent two non-papers to India. As soon as both non-papers are brought on the table and as soon as India is prepared to talk on substantive issues with a political will to solve the problems, we are prepared to go into a peaceful dialogue - negotiations - to settle all our problems. But the necessary requirement for that is - the word I use is "requirement" not precondition, because where human suffering

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is concerned, where human rights are concerned, that is not a precondition - it is a requirement for the creation of a propitious atmosphere, an atmosphere in which the people of Pakistan do not feel that the negotiations and the talks are an exercise in futility; that India is serious about solving problems, and this requirement lowers the repression in Kashmir. And then bring all eight non-papers on the table. On nuclear disarmament, the United States of America has given a multinational, a multilateral proposal, which is a very useful proposal and it has the endorsement of many countries in the world. It has the support of many countries, many States. Why don't we agree to talk on the basis of that useful and very constructive proposal? With these few remarks, Mr. President, I thank you for your indulgence.

Mr. CHANDRA (India): I will be very brief. I share the sentiment of the distinguished Foreign Minister of Pakistan that we should not go into polemics. I would just like to make two simple points. First, the Security Council resolutions are very clear that vacation of aggression by Pakistan from Kashmir is essential.

The second point I wanted to make is that we have always been ready for bilateral discussions with Pakistan for across-the-board normalization of relations with that country, and I therefore do not see any problem in why there should be discussions between the two countries. This is what we have been saying and arguing for all along. There have been a series of communications from our Government to the Government of Pakistan and we do hope that they will respond favourably so that such bilateral discussions can be held to resolve all possible differences.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India for his remarks. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? If not, I intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. But before doing so, I wish to remind you that the next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 16 February, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.